

Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District

Ranking Democratic Member, House Small Business Committee



Velázquez Holds Forum on 9/11 Assistance

During a town hall meeting held at St. Augustine Church, Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez announced that money provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will not have an impact on supplemental security income (SSI) received by residents. The meeting, which provided an open forum for discussion between community members and the Congresswoman, also addressed concerns about the effects of September 11.

"The open forum provided me with an excellent opportunity to hear the concerns of area residents and to address aid in the aftermath of 9/11," Congresswoman Velázquez said.

Representatives from FEMA, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) also attended to directly answer questions from the audience.



Congresswoman Velázquez spoke with community members at a recent open forum.

\$1.6 Million for Lower East Side Projects

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez announced \$400,000 in federal funding for the Lower East Side Girls Club of New York, \$750,000 for a transportation project in Chinatown, and \$500,000 for Betances Health Center -- for a total award of \$1,650,000.

The Lower East Side Girls Club was awarded \$400,000 in funding for construction of a new recreational facility, which will contain a gymnasium, theater,

classroom and more. Another \$750,000 in funding will be used for a study on transportation access and for the acquisition or renovation of property to assuage parking problems in Chinatown.

The \$500,000 award to Betances will be used to offset the facility's revenue shortfall after the attacks of September 11 had a devastating effect on its finances.

LES Tenement Museum Unveils New Tour

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez joined the staff of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum for an event to celebrate its newly unveiled Spanish language public tour entitled *Piecing It Together: Immigrants in the Garment Industry* (*Juantando las Piezas: Trabajadores Inmigrantes en las Industrias de la Costura*).

This new weekly tour offers Spanish speakers an opportunity to experience the lives of two immigrant families who resided in the tenement.

"Since immigration is very important to New York City, its communities, and this museum, the new Spanish language tour is a perfect addition," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "It was immigrant lives that shaped this country and made it what it is today. And it will be these lives that shape it in the future."

In 2001, Congresswoman Velázquez secured \$750,000 to expand the museum's groundbreaking educational programs.



Congresswoman Velázquez spoke with attendees at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum event.

Velázquez Says Federal Retirees are a Priority

Speech to former federal employees highlights new legislation

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez spoke to the Manhattan Bronx Chapter of federal retirees regarding her legislation that would benefit future federal retirement plans, correcting inequities that currently exist in the system.

“Several bills have been introduced to correct these inequities, including mine,” Congresswoman Velazquez said. “I give them my full support because I believe they do something important -- they help you! But they have not gone anywhere. It’s time for Congress to act. We need to hold hearings, mark up these pieces of legislation, and pass them into law. It is time for these inequities to disappear.”

At the event, Congresswoman Velázquez announced her Deferred Annuitant Fairness Act, which would adjust the retirement accounts of deferred annuitants for inflation between the time they separate from government service and the time they begin collecting benefits. It would also eliminate the disparity in spousal protection for deferred annuitants covered under CSRS and FERS.



Congresswoman Velázquez speaks to federal retirees in January.

“In return for your years of dedicated service, I believe that the federal government has an obligation to treat you fairly and support you in your retirement,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “A top priority of Congress will be protecting the hard-earned retirement benefits of federal employees.”

Rally Exposes Labor Abuses in NYC

Anti-sweatshop legislation provides consumers with more information

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez spoke out at a National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (NMASS) rally, that took place in front of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and announced her anti-sweatshop legislation, the Garment Consumers’ Right to Know Act.

“I am here because I wanted you to know that you have my support,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “I have heard your stories -- stories describing cage-like environments with barbed wire and bars. Stories describing children asleep on the floor underneath their mother’s sewing machines. Stories that are both heartwrenching -- and shocking, happening right here, right now.”

Her legislation would provide consumers with greater access to information about the origins of the products they purchase, in addition to enabling employees to bring legal action against, and receive compensation from, a manufacturer for violations of any of the law’s provisions.

“Manufacturers and retailers need to be held accountable for the working conditions of their employees,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “I want to fight to make sure the Department of Labor has the resources it needs to help you.”



Congresswoman Velázquez speaks out against sweatshops during NMASS rally.

Grants Awarded to Our Community

New York City Department of Health.....\$5,543,356 Funding for HIV prevention project	Safe Horizon, Inc.....\$200,000 Training and technical assistance
New York City Department of Health.....\$3,566,669 Funding forHIV/AIDS surveillance	NY County Distict Attorney’s Office..\$500,000 Funding to reduce gun violence
New York City Department of Health.....\$4,368,039 Immunization and vaccine funding for children grants	Vera Institute of Justice.....\$750,344 Support to develop victim safety projects
New York University.....\$1,275,003 Funding to create centers in NYC early childhood program	Benjamin Yoffee.....\$21,215 E-Rate funding
Henry Street Settlement.....\$530,000 Funding for supportive housing project	